

BOOK NOTICES

Nineteenth Century Eugenics

In this book (a partial autobiography) a successful national leader of mature years reviews his own boyhood in the Oneida Community, a communistic venture in New York state in the four decades that embraced the middle of the nineteenth century. The eugenicist of today finds much to praise in this communal effort. Selective mating was practiced through "complex marriage" and children were brought up, not by their parents, but in a series of carefully supervised and graded departments. A strong religious motive pervaded this group and proved both the bond of early union and the basis of later dissention. Outside pressure completed the schism in the early 1880's. Much of this book treats of routine narrative that might be written of the life of any boy up to sixteen years, the story of the Community being interwoven into this narrative. This communal project was noble effort of a sincere people, an effort that deserved better success and wider emulation.—R. A. HEFNER.

My Father's House, an Oneida Boyhood, by Pierrepont Noyes. New York City, Farrar & Rinehart, 1937. \$3.50.

Georg Wilhelm Steller

To most biologists the name of Steller is associated with Steller's jay and Steller's sea cow. It is thus a revelation to learn that this German naturalist in the service of Russia 200 years ago was a physician and a botanist and made his famous voyage to Alaska as a mineralogist with Bering's expedition in 1741. The harrowing tale of this expedition by sail in Arctic waters is best summarized by the fact that disease, mainly scurvy, claimed the lives of 31 men from a total of 78 in the exploring party and crew, Bering himself being one of the victims. Before and after the Alaskan expedition, Steller made natural history surveys in eastern Siberia, around Lake Baikal, the Kamtchatka peninsula, and along the great river courses to the North. He made long sledge journeys in the rigorous winters, handicapped less by climate than by the suspicions and intrigues of old Russia in the troublesome period that followed Peter the Great. Suspected of treason, Steller was arrested in Russia, transported to Siberia, acquitted, and died of a fever at the age of 36 while returning to Russia.

The data collected for this book was accumulated by the author over a period of more than 50 years. The book is more than an exhaustive biography of a great naturalist; it is a model of meticulous detail in biographical writing.

—R. A. HEFNER.

Georg Wilhelm Steller, the Pioneer of Alaskan Natural History, by Leonard Stejneger. 623 pp. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1936. \$6.00.

Man and His World

This book is the successor to "The Nature of the World and of Man." It is extensively rewritten and brought up to date. The authors of the various chapters are professors (in one case a former professor) at the University of Chicago. The arrangement and material are improved over the former book, and the new volume seems admirably adapted to an orientation course. Certainly the material contained therein is basic and fundamental to a well-rounded education. Some of the chapters are extremely stimulating and fairly self-explanatory; others, such as the one on particles and waves, seem beyond the freshman level and will require much "teaching." On the whole the book is a fine and successful attempt to provide a broad overview of man and his world.—L. H. S.

The World and Man as Science Sees Them, edited by Forest Ray Moulton. xix+533 pages. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1937. Text Edition, \$3.00.